

Cross-cultural Adaptation in a Rural College

Carol RIERA
June 8, 2016
1:45 – 3:00
AQPC – Centre des congrès de Québec



THE WORKSHOP CONTENT

1. Introduction
2. Rationale for the Study: The Importance of Culture
3. Literature Review
4. Methodology
5. Findings
6. Implications
7. Discussion
8. Conclusion

1. INTRODUCTION

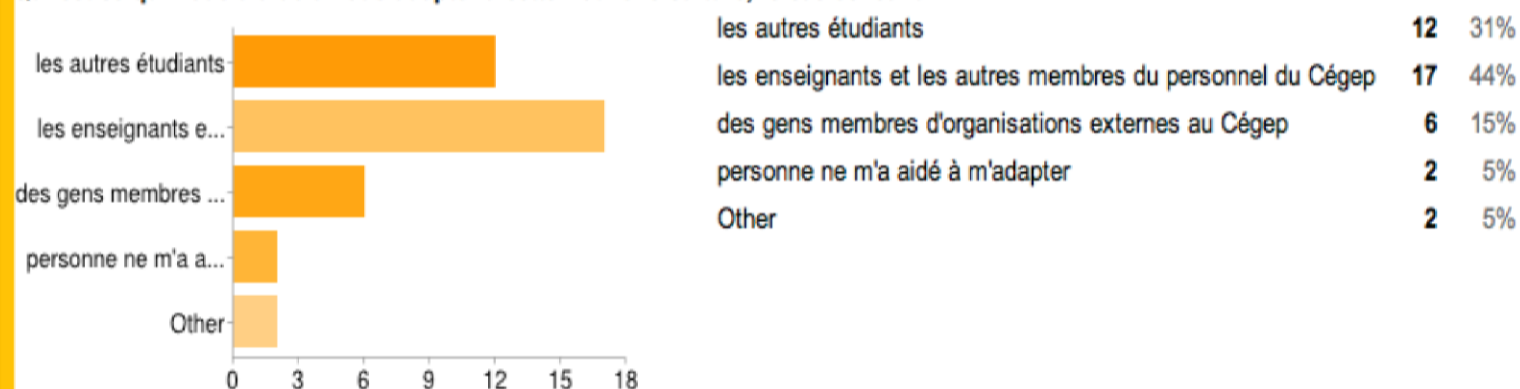
What made you sign up for this workshop?

How did I get interested in this subject?

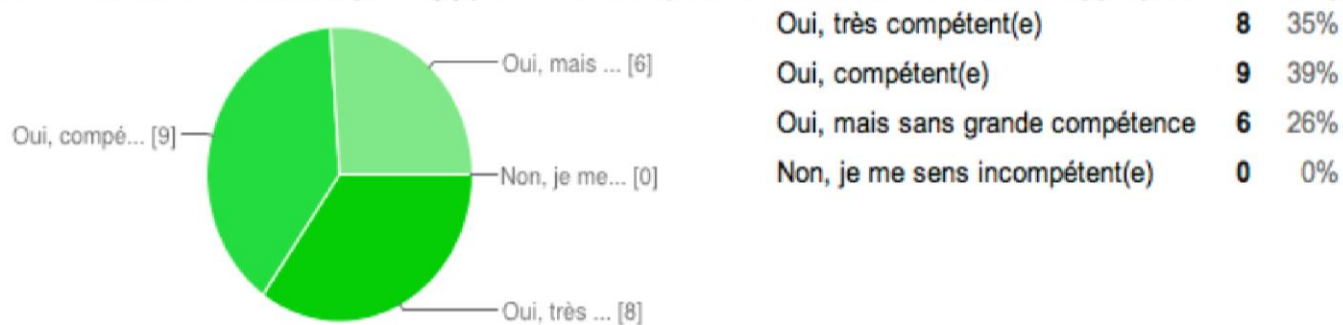
- Master's course at the University of Nottingham entitled Intercultural Communication
- Research assignment involving surveying our 50 international students (2013)
- Led to thesis (2014)



Qui est-ce qui vous a aidé à vous adapter à cette nouvelle culture, le cas échéant?



Vous sentez-vous assez compétent(e) pour communiquer efficacement et de manière appropriée avec vos professeurs?



Made by Carol Riera

LET'S LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

The survey showed that a large proportion of the international students felt that teachers and staff were the most important people with regards to their success and well being.



WHY IS THIS TOPIC IMPORTANT?



IF THE WORLD WAS A VILLAGE OF 100 PEOPLE, THERE WOULD BE:

- 61 Asians (20 Chinese and 17 East Indians)
- 14 Africans
- 11 Europeans
- 9 Latinos (Central and South America)
- 5 North Americans
- 0 Australians

And there would be

- 33 Christians
- 20 Muslims
- 13 Hindus
- 6 Buddhists
- 14 people from other religions
- 14 atheists



Myron W. Lustig et Jolene Koestler (2013)

In today's world, geographical mobility is increasingly causing societies to face the consequences of multiculturalism. In large cities around the world, cultural diversity is an everyday reality and, as a result of globalisation, intercultural contact is becoming commonplace (Kim, 2001; Jackson, 2014, 2012).

- So how are we helping people to adapt to these changes?
- Domestic enrolment is continually decreasing and to ensure the survival of rural colleges there is a demographic need to attract and retain international students (Vallée, 2013).

The former Director General, Claude Harvey, wrote on his blog:

This year, what allows us to beat the government predicted number of students is the international students enrolled in our programs. Without them, with only the Quebecer students, we would be below the ministry's projections. (2013)

What would be the effect of this decrease in enrolment were it to happen?

Of course, it is not only important to recruit new international students, but as Mr. Harvey states, "We must keep each student for the duration of their studies".

"Each student is unique and deserves special attention depending on his/her profile. In the ideal situation, we must eliminate prejudices based on social class, origin, ethnic groups, intellectual capacity, etc. "

"If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes the college as a whole to bring the student to succeed, no matter where he comes from, no matter who he is and no matter what he would like to do in his future."



PORTRAIT OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Some statistics for Quebec (2012)*

- 16,770 came into Quebec
- 38,114 international students in the province
- 75.3% were 15-24 years old
- 73.3% of the international students in 2012 were enrolled in universities

Some statistics from the colleges (2013)*

- More that 2,100 students (86%) were enrolled in a technical program
- Since 2009, the number of international students has increased by 50%

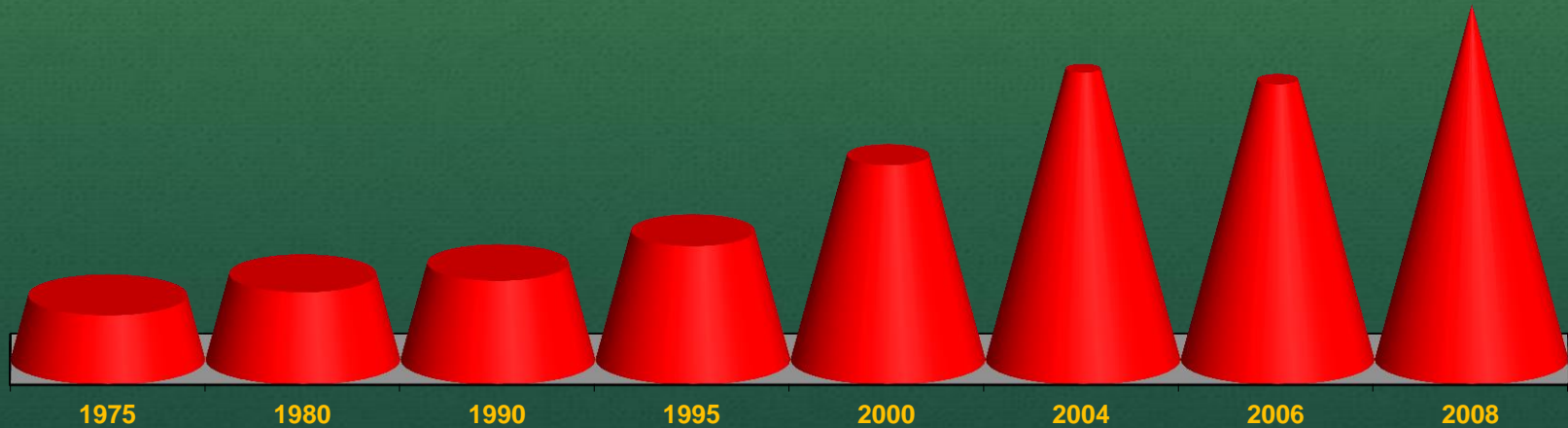
WHERE ARE THEY FROM?*

- They come from approximately 100 countries
- It has become more and more diverse over time
- In 2013, 63% of the students were from France
- There is not such diversity in our rural college

* Option travail: Formation en gestion de la diversité culturelle



- This shows the increase in the number of students enrolled outside of their home country from 1975-2020
- More than 3.3 million students studying abroad and the OECD and UNESCO estimate that by 2020, there will be 7 million international students



2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY: THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE

- To me, coming to Canada was a dream. It was already a place I wanted to discover...My dream came from the desire to travel and meet new people. (Carine, Cameroon)
- It was always my dream to come here. When I was 10, I saw a documentary about Canada and I remember seeing a picture of a white forest with tall fir trees. Since then, I promised myself I would come and study in Canada. It took me 10 years but I made it! (Roland, Reunion Island)

THE DEMOGRAPHIC NECESSITY OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE

According to Myron W. Lustig and Jolene Koestler (2013), authors of *Introduction to Intercultural Competence*, it is more and more necessary to understand the role of different cultures in our interpersonal exchanges.

FOUR DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO DEFINE CULTURE

- Content: beliefs, language, art, morals, etc.
- Social heredity of a group: transmitted, taught
- Perceptual approach: governed by ideas in the mind
- Expression: daily communicative exchanges

THE COMPONENTS OF CULTURE

The visible component of culture includes daily functions like eating, listening to music, using tools, among other preferences.

The hidden component of culture is composed of profound beliefs of the culture, the values and the norms about the “right” way to behave and the “right” way to interpret what is going on in our world.

CULTURAL VARIABILITY

Oetzel (1995) developed a theory based on efficient decision-making when people of different cultures communicate and interact. People from different cultural back-grounds can have opposing styles in the decision-making process, which will certainly influence the way conflict is created and resolved in the conversation.

Hofstede's dimensions of cultural variability have become a landmark in the study of national cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010). They are: Power distance, collectivism vs. individualism, femininity vs. masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term versus short-term orientation.

Power distance is defined by Hofstede et al. (2010) as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (61).

In individualistic cultures there is an emphasis on individuals’ goals, self-realization, and achievement. Individuality is more important than group membership (Gudykunst, 2004). On the contrary, collectivist cultures emphasize group membership.

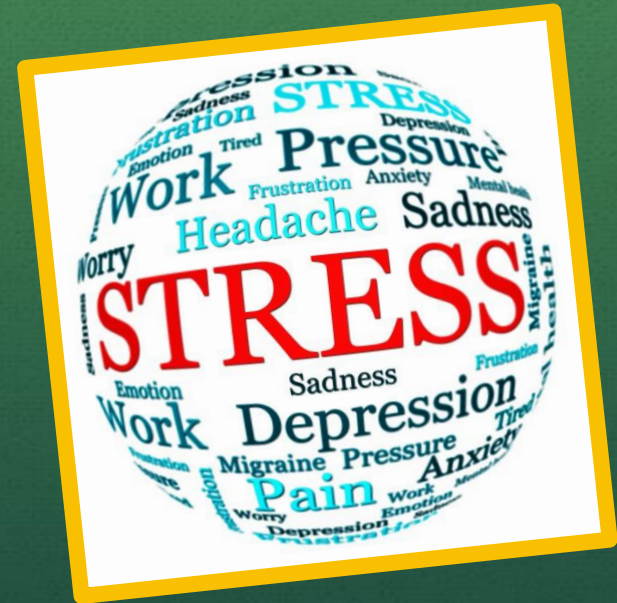
Students from collectivistic cultures will generally comply with teachers’ requests about classroom management.

The nature of teachers’ persuasive messages differ across cultures (Lustig & Koester, 2010)

A society is considered masculine when emotional roles are clearly distinct.

A society is called feminine when emotional roles crossover.

Hofstede et al. (2010) define uncertainty avoidance as the degree to which members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations.



Saving face

- **Saving face, losing face, giving face**
 - Saving face plays some roles in almost every culture, but in China and other southeastern Asian countries it is a constant preoccupation
 - One never speaks or acts in a social setting without considering the effect on reputation
 - A primary goal at a social or business gathering is to avoid embarrassing or offending one's associates
 - One does not show or provoke anger
- “Thank you” is mainly spoken to strangers



Long-term orientation means to promote virtues geared to future rewards, such as perseverance and savings. Contrarily, short-term orientation, promotes virtues linked to the past and present, in particular, tradition and the saving of face (one's reputation), and respecting social obligations.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

- All students deal with stress adapting to a new environment
- But ISs must overcome more difficulties that do not effect home students
- In a sense, foreign students are being continually thrust into the role of ambassadors...often by well-meaning people...but sometimes by prejudiced individuals who may denigrate the policies or achievements of the student's country of origin.
Furnham (2004: 17)

CULTURE SHOCK*

1. The honeymoon stage: This stage refers to the initial feelings of euphoria, enchantment, fascination and enthusiasm.
2. The crisis stage: This stage is also called the 'the culture shock stage'. It refers to feelings of anxiety, inadequacy, frustration, etc.
3. The recovery stage: In this stage people start to get used to the new culture. The new culture starts to make sense.
4. The adjustment stage: This last phase refers to feelings of enjoyment, feeling competent in the new environment.

Oberg 1960 cited in Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009

CULTURAL DIVERSITY CAN CAUSE CULTURE SHOCK

Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009) define culture shock as the set of psychological and physical consequences of experiencing changes in our circumstances.

- Sense of loss
- Deprivation
- Helplessness, etc.

DIFFERENT SETS OF VALUES

NORTH AMERICA

- **Teacher is considered as a guide or mentor**
- **The students are allowed to question what the teacher is saying**
- **Students are motivated by a need to succeed on a personal level**
- **Expressing personal opinions is valued**
- **Creativity is encouraged**

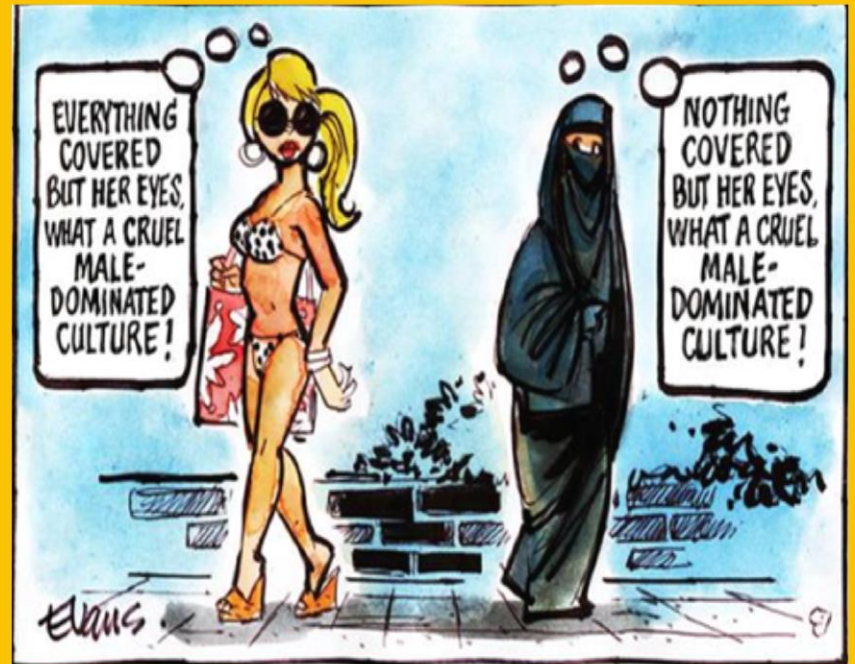
OTHER CULTURES

- **Respect for the teacher's authority**
- **Never question what the teacher says**
- **The student's motivation comes from the family**
- **It is better to be seen than heard**
- **The group is more important than the individual**

DIFFERENT SETS OF VALUES

Differences - East and West

| East | West |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Internal self control | External control |
| Communal | Individual |
| Hierarchy | Equality |
| Modesty | Achievement |
| Harmony | Winning |
| Saving face | Pride |
| Silence oriented | Noise oriented |
| Time is life | Time is money |
| Respect for status | Respect for results |
| Respect elders | Respect competence |
| Truth oriented | Fact oriented |
| Nosy and curious | Value Privacy |
| Hypocritical | Open |
| Sharing | Selfish |
| Accept | Control |
| Long term oriented | Short term oriented |
| Indirect | Direct |
| Interdependent | Independent |
| Being | Doing |



OTHER FACTORS

- Globalization vs. an Insular Society
- International Students as Visible Minorities
- Benefits of Intercultural Activities
- Creating Intercultural Citizens

GLOBALIZATION VS. AN INSULAR SOCIETY

- This is a very broad topic!
- Suffice it to say that the ever-changing political climate in Quebec affects the ISs' integration
- The Charter of Values debate was difficult for certain students in 2013
- Quebec's history plays a role in how the QSs welcome others

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AS VISIBLE MINORITIES

- When studying abroad, many ISs experience becoming a visible minority for the first time, perhaps causing them to feel like they do not belong (Jackson, 2014)
- Researchers have found that ISs experiencing prejudice at the hands of local students is not uncommon
- One result: students make friends with students from their home country or those from a country with a similar culture

BENEFITS OF INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES

- Studies have shown that ISs benefit emotionally and psychologically and experience less stress if they have contact with domestic students (Zhou et al., 2008)
- Studies have also shown that it is difficult for students to have authentic contact with students. Many articles, in Canada, and elsewhere have confirmed this
- Cross-race peer relations and friendship quality (Aboud, F. et al, 2003); A failure of communication on the cross-cultural campus (Brown, L. , 2009)

CREATING INTERCULTURAL CITIZENS

- Institutions around the world are making internationalisation a priority
- The rhetoric is impressive, but, putting practices into place takes time and money
- Being involved in an intercultural experience does not guarantee that the student will be understanding of cultural differences

CREATING INTERCULTURAL CITIZENS

- The key to successful learning across cultures is to acquire knowledge and understanding of cultural factors (Beamer, 1992) to avoid labeling foreign behaviours as rude so that intercultural relationships can flourish
- Students need to be shown the way!
- But an intercultural approach does not mean abandoning value positions; instead it means recognizing the importance of under-standing and negotiation (Alread et al., 2006)

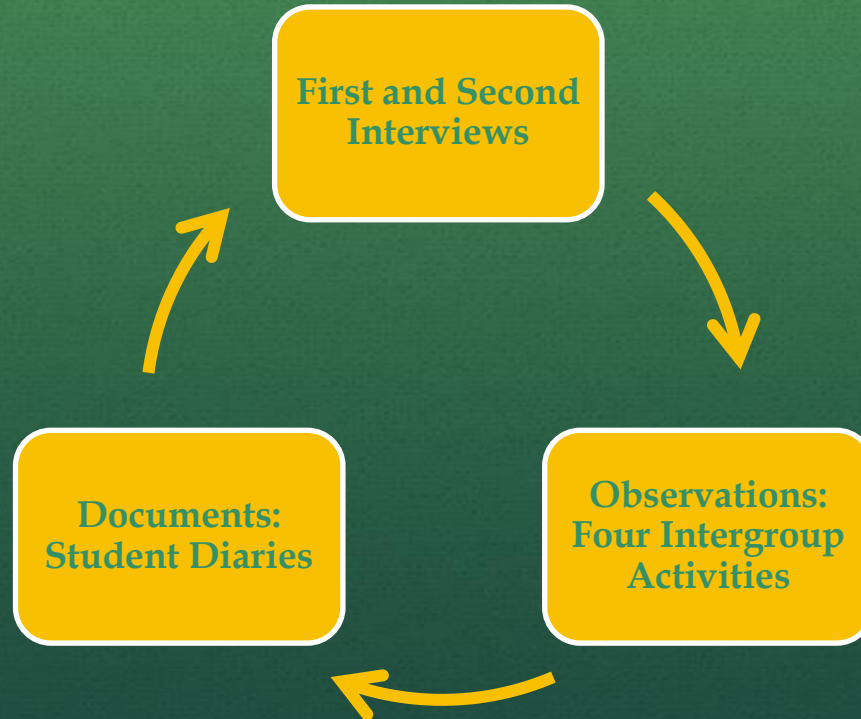
4. METHODOLOGY

- So we know, students have difficulty engaging with home students
- Qualitative study to examine the challenges
- Students were interviewed before participating in group activities
- International students were asked to participate in weekly diary entries
- HSs and ISs were interviewed a second time after the intergroup activities
- Qualitative analysis of the pre and post-treatment interview data and diaries was conducted

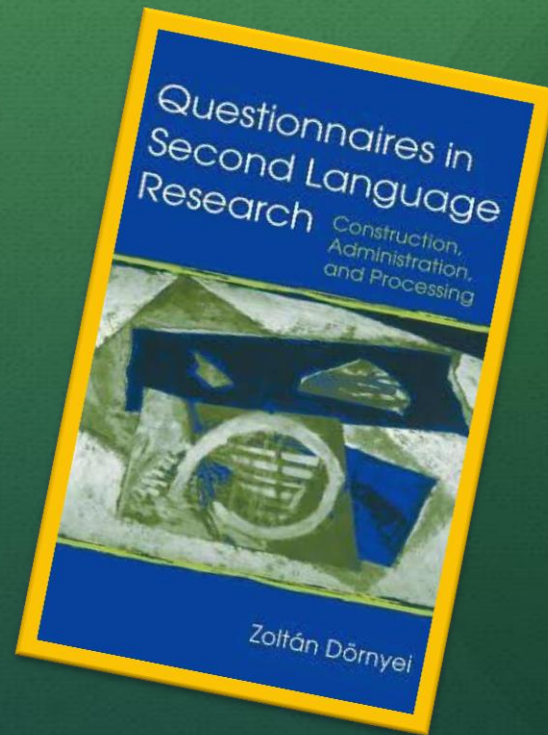
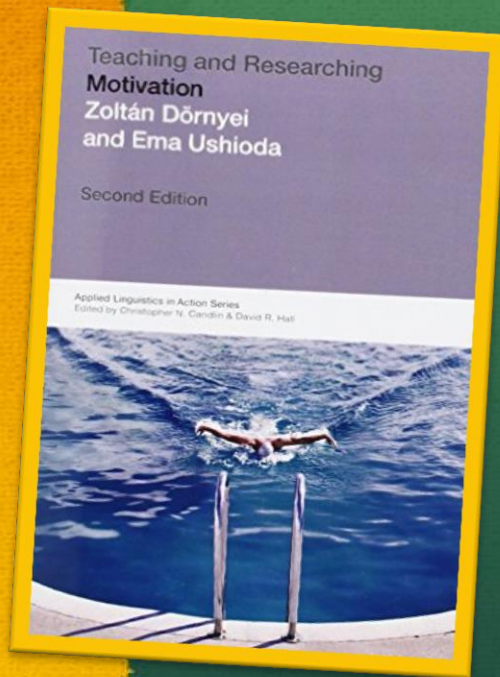
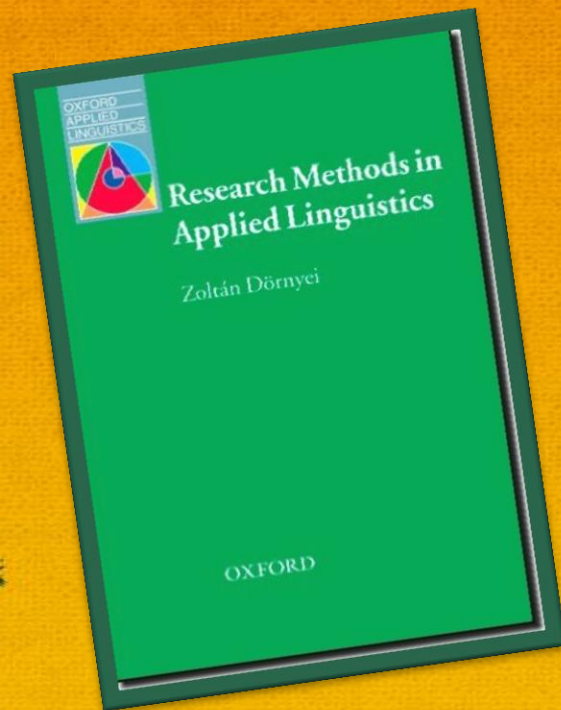
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM



INTEGRATED ANALYSIS OF MULTIPLE SOURCES OF QUALITATIVE DATE



ZOLTAN DÖRNYEI



THESIS DIRECTOR



THE PARTICIPENTS

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

| Student # | Pseudonym | Gender | Country of Origin | Age | Gender | Mother Tongue | Course |
|-----------|-----------|--------|-------------------|-----|--------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Student 1 | Carine | Female | Cameroon | 31 | F | Banfang | Accounting and Management |
| Student 2 | Roland | Male | Reunion Island | 23 | M | French | Animal Health |
| Student 3 | Fatima | Female | Morocco | 18 | F | Arabic | Nursing |
| Student 4 | Youssef | Male | Tunisia | 19 | M | Arabic | Hearing Instruments Specialist |
| Student 5 | Alice | Female | Cameroon | 29 | F | Yemba | Nursing |
| Student 6 | Christina | Female | France | 20 | F | French | Bioecology |
| Student 7 | Marie | Female | Reunion Island | 22 | F | French | Special Care Education |
| Student 8 | Edmond | Male | Reunion Island | 31 | M | French | Nursing |

QUEBECER STUDENTS

| Student # | Pseudonym | Gender | Country of Origin | Age | Gender | Mother Tongue | Course |
|------------|-----------|--------|-------------------|-----|--------|---------------|----------------------|
| Student 9 | Lea | Female | Canada | 24 | F | French | Bioecology |
| Student 10 | Zach | Male | Canada | 28 | M | French | Physics |
| Student 11 | William | Male | Canada | 18 | M | French | Humanities |
| Student 12 | Paulette | Female | Canada | 17 | F | French | Humanities with math |
| Student 13 | Felix | Male | Canada | 18 | M | French | Science |
| Student 14 | Annabelle | Female | Canada | 18 | F | French | Science |
| Student 15 | Jacob | Male | Canada | 21 | M | French | Computer Science |
| Student 16 | Louis | Male | Canada | 20 | M | French | Arts and Literature |

INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Philo café

April 8th

Potluck

April 10th

Cinema Café "Duplessis et après"

April 15th

Masquerade Bal

April 29th

Organisé par le Comité pour les étudiants internationaux



Bal Costumé

29 avril 2014
Mistook
Impro à 19h
Début du bal à 20h30
Buffet - DJ - Studio photo **GRATUIT**

Vous êtes invités à signer le formulaire de Carol Riéra
pour l'aider à faire sa thèse au cours de la soirée

5. FINDINGS

- Inspired by Shoaib and Dörnyei's (2005) study, the data was analysed in two steps
- The first looked at the main motivational constructs in the ISs' integration.
- The second analysis involved investigating the salient aspects of cross-cultural adaptation and ICC while taking into consideration the ISs' cultural background and by observing the effect intergroup activities had on connecting with hosts.

FINDINGS CONTINUED

- The integrative analysis of the three sets of data points towards three predominant themes:
- (1) ISs' Perspectives on Non-Acceptance of Differences
- (2) QSs' Attitudes about Prejudice
- (3) Lessons Learned during Group Interaction

MAIN MOTIVATIONAL CONSTRUCTS IN THE IS'S INTEGRATION

| Dimension | Frequency of positive influences | Frequency of negative influences | Frequency of neutral influences | Illustrations |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Host-Environment-Related Dimension | | | | |
| Host contact | 6 | 21 | 1 | I am currently in an exam session and we study as a group of students from my class. It is a nice mix of Quebecers and international students. (Edmond – diary) |
| Ability for the ISs to integrate | 40 | 8 | 2 | I thought it would be a little easier to be integrated. I was eager, but sometimes people don't easily accept differences. The way they interpret my differences, for example, I practice a different religion and they push me to talk about myself. Otherwise, I wouldn't speak of it. They ask me questions. There are people that are all right, they are neutral, but there are those who interpret things badly. They tell me. That shocks me a little. For example, when they speak of polygamy. Even in class, in our sociology course, that shocks me a little. The way they talk about it. It is a little traumatizing. (Fatima - interview) |
| Ability for QSs to integrate | 7 | 3 | | [Did you notice anything] That at the Masquerade Ball everyone was intermingling, especially after the dance we did. (Alice – 2 nd interview) |
| Larger community | 12 | 1 | 1 | Well yes, I am well integrated into the community anyway, but I do most of my activities with international students. I work for the city, I go to church and I know people outside of the college and also the staff at the college. That is why I am not bothered because with the teachers it is fine. I have more affinity with people from outside the college and also the staff from the college. The connection is good in class with the teachers but with the students it does not go so well. (Carine – interview) |

FINDINGS CONTINUED

The fact that we are always grouped together with other ISs, and that we are not in contact with other Quebecers, makes me a little uncomfortable because it is as if we have been disregarded. (Fatima, I2)

Instrumental Dimension

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Good Job | 3 | 1 | | The job market is better here. (Roland – interview) |
| Opportunity to travel | 5 | | | Because of the College's partnership with my school, I was able to get a scholarship to cover the costs of my studies. My dream came from the desire to travel and meet new people. (Carine – interview) |

Significant-Other-Related Dimension

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|----|----|---|---|
| Family | 5 | 1 | 3 | My family always encourages me and they tell me that everything will go well, but I don't feel a pressure from them to succeed. I don't feel pressure; on the contrary. (Youssef - interview) |
| Quebecer friends | 5 | 10 | | I don't know how to give a name to the relationship. Sometimes a Quebec student will prefer to work alone than to work with a foreign student. So, the relationships are difficult. I don't have any Quebecer friends; none at all. (Alice - interview) |
| Partner | 1 | | | And yes, there is my boyfriend who is coming so there will be more positive changes. He is coming to study in Computer Science and I know that I am going to have to make more changes to my personality because it won't be the same thing anymore, because we will be a couple and we will live together and we will have projects together so that will make for a lot of changes. (Marie - interview) |
| International friends | 11 | 1 | | Last year was good in that there was a cohesion; a brotherly spirit. It was reassuring to have a sort of family here, but I experienced it as a bit of a failure, because I didn't come here to hang out with a bunch of international students. I came to live with the Quebecers. So that is why I don't have any regrets at all not to be living with Quebecers. (Christina - interview) |

Affective/Integrative-Related Dimension

| | | | | |
|---|---|----|---|--|
| Attitudes towards the host community | 7 | 18 | 5 | What I don't understand is that they were not serious and they didn't want to listen to our point of view...They have false ideas of our religion. They will back away from us. (Fatima – diary) |
| Attitudes towards the international community | | 12 | | Since I have been here, I've realised that people don't know a lot about us, because I am Muslim. They don't know much about us so they are a little afraid of us because all they do know about us is what they have heard. And also because of the people that have committed acts that were described as the acts of Muslims, but they should have been described as the acts of criminals. Of course, that is frightening. If I were in your place, I would be afraid of Muslims. Sometimes, I don't feel the need to speak about myself. People are afraid of me. (Youssef – interview) |
| Acceptance of others or of differences | 3 | 14 | | The thing that shocked me is that difference is not good. There are people that distance themselves from you because you are a foreign student. They are afraid of you. They have prejudice; that's the cultural shock. (Fatima – interview) |
| Attitudes towards the target language (being mis-understood - not under-standing) | 2 | 18 | | I am always being misunderstood, even now. In class, when I speak, I always have the impression that I speak very loudly but everyone always says, "pardon men?" Maybe it is my accent and the vocabulary that I use. I understand the Quebecers accent well, except for certain expressions. (Carine – interview) |
| Attitudes towards language learning & improvement | 2 | | | My best memory is my improvement in French. (Fatima – interview) |

| Self-Concept-Related Dimension | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----|----|---|---|
| Confidence | 7 | | 1 | Yes, even if I have doubts, most of the time I know that I can do things well. (Marie – 2 nd interview) |
| Satisfaction | 6 | 2 | | I think I have succeeded in terms of integration. It is not easy. There are people that even after 2 years still have problems. I have succeeded. (Carine – interview) |
| Acceptance of one's limits | 1 | | | It's true that for the moment I haven't yet developed this rapidity, but with time, I am slowly adapting. When I take exams, I may need more time than the others, but if the teacher says it is a two-hour exam, I take the full two hours. I don't leave early like some of the Quebecers do after an hour and a half. I take my time. During the practicum, there are really fast students but I don't worry about that. (Alice – interview) |
| Self-determination | 2 | | | I found myself left out from the other students, but I stayed calm and I did my job. (Carine – diary) |
| Goal-Oriented-Related Dimension | | | | |
| De-monstrating ability | 11 | 2 | | My best memory is my improvement in French. I also love being self-sufficient and the fact that the teachers encourage me and I can see that I am improving with my dexterity. (Fatima – interview) |
| Goal specificity | 16 | 2 | | [a positive memory] My nomination at the Awards of Excellence for outstanding grades. I was hoping to have my name displayed on the wall, but I didn't win. (Carine – interview) |
| Educational-Context-Related Dimension | | | | |
| Teachers & Staff | 18 | 4 | | Regarding personalized support. We would never see this at home. Here you can speak to the teachers outside the classroom, while at home we either have to make an appointment and even then we don't always get one. (Edmond - interview) |
| Classmates & teamwork | 2 | 13 | 1 | I was shocked by the fact that during group work (at least two per team) I had to do a presentation alone even though some of the groups had three on their team. I asked a classmate if she would like to join me to make a team, but she said she was already on one. I was really surprised when I saw that there were three people on her team when I was all alone. (Alice – diary) |
| Workload and assignments | 1 | 16 | | It is really busy; really too much because I am involved in things outside of my classes so it is really too much. (Christina – 2 nd interview) |
| Environment | 8 | 1 | 1 | Here, we are lucky that there are not too many of us. One has the time for each student and the environment is conducive to learning. (Carine – interview) |

SALIENT ASPECTS

The more the IS's culture differed from the hosts' culture, the more the IS struggled.

Colour of skin, country of origin and gender shaped experiences.

This is in line with the findings of Aboud, et al. (2003), Talburt and Stewart (1999) and others.

It is easier to integrate depending on which culture you are a product of. My culture is similar to the French one and it's a developed country. But if you compare the Quebec culture to the Cameroon one, it is a fairly big upheaval. (Roland, I2)

SALIENT ASPECTS CONTINUED

Building a wall:

No, it is not a good integration when I protect myself and I put up barriers....I don't feel at ease to break the barrier, already in the look they are going to give you, it is really weird. I don't want to accept the looks. I don't want to be told that I am not part of the group, so I prefer to be alone. (Carine, I1)

SALIENT ASPECTS CONTINUED

When I say that I have an open-mind it means that I try to confront them [prejudices]; I try to detect them and take nothing for granted. It would be lying to yourself to pretend that you have no prejudices. (Jacob, I2)

When asked if she had witnessed hateful or racist remarks, Paulette replied:

I don't think so, but I have seen them laughing behind their backs or just they don't want to sit with them because they are black. For example, I have seen situations in a class, where there are only two seats left and one is close to their friends, but there is a black person there, so they choose the seat farther away just because they don't want to be seated next to the black person. (Paulette, I2)

SALIENT ASPECTS CONTINUED

Actions speak louder than words

In my...course, there is a student with dark skin and I know that in the beginning she was all-alone, but now, there are Quebecers with her, but for sure that had to be hard for her in the beginning to know no one....She was the only IS in that particular group. (Paulette, I1)

SALIENT ASPECTS CONTINUED

After participating in the Masquerade Ball, all interviewed students in attendance (ISs - 7 out of 8, QSs - 6 out of 8) seemed to reap benefits from the intercultural exchanges that occurred.

Several studies also found that perceptions and relationships improve following organized contact.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Alred et al. (2006) have pursued the study of interculturality and believe that education is needed to encourage 'students to become active citizens prepared to engage with the different communities to which they belong' (2).

Fatima suggested:

Teachers should talk about sensitive issues, for example, the differences between cultures. They could even debate some of these issues; talk about the best way to bridge the differences and how to do that. (Fatima, I1)

IMPLICATIONS CONTINUED

This echoes Apfelbaum et al.'s recommendations (2012) which also note that failure to discuss race makes Whites appear 'more biased in the eyes of Black observers than do White individuals who openly talk about race'.

- Intercultural integration can be uncomfortable for all parties.
- ISs may feel they are abandoning their culture.
- QSs may feel they are losing their identity.
- Yet, Alred et al. (2006) argue that becoming intercultural 'will provide a deeper and enriched understanding of one's national identity' (2), and in doing so we become more conscious of our own perspectives.

IMPLICATIONS CONTINUED

I have realized that the fact of integrating into a society does not mean you need to follow all of its values and its culture, but you must know how to sort out and follow what fits in with your own values and principles while at the same time respecting their culture and their habits. (Fatima, diary)

IMPLICATIONS CONTINUED

Jackson (2014) argues it is not uncommon to fear Otherness as it is a threat to 'losing one's own identity, culture and positioning' (174).

It is possible that because of Quebec's strong focus on national identity that it fails to provide the type of intercultural education needed to create open-minded citizens that embrace change.

7. DISCUSSION

What would you like to share with us?

Do you have any ideas that have proven successful?

8. CONCLUSION

- Purpose to discover how the ISs' integration could be improved
- What affect intergroup activities would have on connecting with Qs
- The findings support arguments in the literature: host contact problematic/ISs befriending ISs

CONCLUSION CONTINUED

- Let's be clear: the issues depend on both the source and host cultures
- Will differ depending on which country they come from
- Evidence suggests non-European students experience the most difficulties

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LEVEL OF ADAPTATION

The difficulty to connect is not simply a question of racism:

- As we have seen other factors influence adaptation such as: country of origin, pre-departure expectations, preparedness, personal characteristics, communication skills, psychological orientations, motivating factors, demographic characteristics (Kim, 2012)
- But many Qs have not had contact with people from other cultures
- They need to be shown how to approach people and learn what to talk about

WHAT TO NURTURE IN OUR STUDENTS

- International and intercultural skills
- Communication skills
- Raise awareness and social conscience
- Promote cultural diversity in the context of globali-zation

There are many reasons to explain the misunderstandings that can happen during intercultural exchanges. Gudykunst (2004) lists a few of them:

- 1) The messages can be transmitted in a way that is difficult to understand by the newcomer (for example, because of a particular pronunciation or accent).
- 2) The participants can have different rules of communication which affect the way in which the messages are understood.
- 3) One of the speakers has not fully mastered the language being spoken.
- 4) A lack of understanding of the way in which certain speech acts are accomplished in a certain social context.
- 5) The subject could be too intimately linked to the culture (different cultural relevance).

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

In Europe, understanding non-verbal communication is considered as an indicator of a proper education and good manners. This is not so clearly recognized in the US and Canada.

Students told me that even if their mother tongue is French, there are many expressions that they do not understand.

Gudykunst (2004) believes that the most important cultural difference related to time are the problems that can occur in a conversation when we believe we have made a definite appointment or deadline but the dates and times are then not respected by the person from a different culture.

The attitudes of the international students towards teaching and learning are different to those of our students and can cause problems for the teachers who do not have experience teaching to students from different cultures.
(Flowerdew et Miller, 1995)

Saving face - Students from certain cultures do not ask their teachers questions because in their home country, it could imply that the teacher did not do a good job of teaching the subject matter.

PEDAGOGICAL TIPS

Put yourself in their shoes

You just arrived in a new place, and you have to get to your new college.

Here is the plan.

How would you feel looking at the map.



BE KNOWLEDGEABLE

It is important to know something about the social groups and the country of origin of your students.

If you have traveled and are aware of the differences between different countries this is a plus.

Being open-minded towards others can only help you in your teaching.

THERE IS NO MAGIC FORMULA



What works in one situation, may not work in the next!

OTHER THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

| Attitudes | Don't treat them differently |
|---|--|
| <p>You must prepare yourself for communication problems caused by a student's lack of knowledge of the new school culture.</p> <p>It is best to have an attitude based on curiosity and openness and the capacity to be non-judgemental about other's beliefs and behaviours.</p> | <p>You should treat them fairly, like you would with any other student, while being aware of the differences.</p> <p>For example, you notice when students are visual or auditory learners, and you adjust yourself accordingly.</p> |

**Do not accept unacceptable
behaviour from anyone.**

Ex. Plagiarism, not respecting meeting times

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF THE STUDENTS THEMSELVES

Imagine you are in a new world where you know no one, you are facing your destiny in an unfamiliar country, strange faces, new culture and a new life. Little by little, the anxiety and stress caused by being away from your family and your homeland lessen, and you start to find a path in your new surroundings. You try to build a new family without forgetting or betraying your original family and homeland.

Student from Rwanda

One day a lady said to me: "ta fille n'est pas sauvage!" (Your daughter is not wild). I took it so badly and I was really angry with her until I realized that all she meant was that my daughter was very calm. Since then, I have learnt so many Quebecer expressions and I continue to learn more day after day.

Student from Belgium

MORE STUDENT COMMENTS

I found myself outside in the middle of a bad blowing snow storm in Quebec City. I had the scare of my life because I had never even heard of such a storm. I wondered what I should do, where I would sleep, I didn't even have enough money on me. I thought to myself it would be stupid to die of cold when I came to Quebec to find happiness.

Student from Cameroon

I encourage all young adults to have an experience like this because in spite of the difficulties we learn a lot about ourselves. It allows us to see a different reality. We must overcome many things so we must not be afraid to ask for help from our teachers and other college staff members. For me, if I have succeeded it is thanks to them. We must also support other international students because over time they become like family.

Student from Reunion Island

A LAST STUDENT COMMENT

I really learned to know the ISs because of those activities. Maybe it is prejudice that I had but certain groups, like the Cameroonians, that I had perceived as very reserved...are capable of expressing a very coherent discourse..., very similar to us who are experiencing the same problems in the same way that we might experience them, if we were to go live in another country. (Jacob, I2)

OBSERVATIONS

- Cultural diversity is more and more common
- Intercultural committees have developed in the colleges but with varying forms and success
- Many initiatives have been put into place, but there is still a lot to be done.
- Because personnel is constantly changing, there is a need to transfer intercultural skills
- Thus the importance for each college to support intercultural initiatives

A RELEVANT QUOTE



Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends.

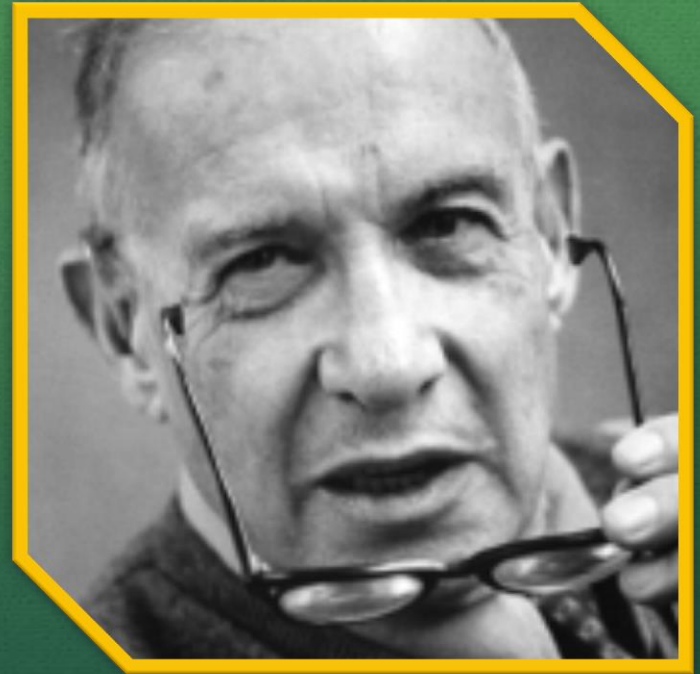
(Maya Angelou)

izquotes.com

Peter F. Drucker

"The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."

"In the 21st century, there will be only two kinds of people: those that think globally, and those that are looking for work."



An Austrian-born American management consultant, educator, and author



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Intercultural Interactions: Reducing the urge to turn away from difference

Adaptation across languages and cultures in a rural Quebec
college as perceived by the international students and their
domestic peers

Carol Elizabeth Riera



Dissertation submitted to the School of English Studies of the University of
Nottingham in partial fulfilment of the MA in Applied Linguistics

Supervisor: Dr. Zoltán Dörnyei

November 2014

The majority of this information comes from the courses that I took at the University of Nottingham in England and the research that I undertook during my Master's of Applied Linguistics. The bibliography is included at the end of the slides which will be available electronically from the AQPC's site.

Thank you so much for your interest in this topic!



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